

**2005 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Montana Youth**  
**Methamphetamine Users vs. Methamphetamine Non-Users**

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# **2005 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

## **Risk Behaviors of Montana Youth**

### **Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users**

#### **Methamphetamine Use**

Methamphetamine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that dramatically affects the central nervous system. It is a white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that easily dissolves in water or alcohol.

Methamphetamine is taken orally or intranasally (snorting the powder), by intravenous injection, and by smoking. Users may become addicted quickly, and use it with increasing frequency and in increasing doses. Chronic methamphetamine abusers exhibit symptoms that can include violent behavior, anxiety, confusion, and insomnia. They also can display a number of psychotic features, including paranoia, auditory hallucinations, mood disturbances, and delusions (for example, the sensation of insects creeping on the skin). The paranoia can result in homicidal as well as suicidal thoughts.

This report addresses the question “Are those youth involved with methamphetamine at risk for other unhealthy behaviors?” Since 1999 the Youth Risk Behavior Survey has been addressing methamphetamine use among 7-8 grade and high school students. Data indicates that since 1999 methamphetamine use among high school students has dropped by 39 percent and among 7-8 grade students use has declined by 63 percent. This is extremely good news, however, during February 2005, 8.3 percent of high school students had reported using methamphetamine at least once in their lifetimes.

#### **Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction every two years to 7th and 8th grade students and to high school students. The purpose of the survey is to help monitor the prevalence of behaviors that not only influence youth health, but also put youth at risk for the most significant health and social problems that can occur during adolescence. While all schools in Montana can participate in the survey on a volunteer basis, approximately 50 high schools are randomly selected to be included with high schools from other states for national data and reports.

The 2005 YRBS was conducted in February of 2005 with 9,178 7th and 8th grade students and 10,259 high school students. This represents approximately 38 percent of all 7th and 8th grade students and 21 percent of all high school students in Montana. Schools administering the survey were provided with detailed written instructions on conducting a random survey in their schools. To encourage accurate responses to sensitive questions, a strict protocol was implemented to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all participating students.

## Survey Validity and Limitations

Data used in this report from the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey are not based on a random survey. It would not be valid to generalize the findings from this survey to all 7th and 8th grade and high school students in Montana. It is only valid to attribute the results of this survey to the students who reported their behaviors in response to the items in the questionnaire. In addition, respondents in self-reported surveys may have a tendency to underreport behaviors that are socially undesirable, unhealthy, or illegal (alcohol consumption, drug use, seat belt non-usage, etc.) and overreport behaviors that are socially desirable (amount of exercise, etc.).

## Survey Results

For the purposes of this report, methamphetamine using youth responded “1 or more times” to the question “During your life, how many times have you used methamphetamines (also called speed, crystal, crank, or ice)?” Ten separate risk behaviors associated with violence, sexual behavior, tobacco use and alcohol and other drug use were investigated for association with the methamphetamine use risk behavior. These risk behaviors are listed in Table 1 and Table 2.

Results of the investigation indicate the following:

- **Montana youth who have used methamphetamines are more likely to have used/abused alcohol in the past 30 days than youth who have not used methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are about four times more likely (80 percent vs. 21 percent) to have had at least one drink of alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey than students who do not use methamphetamines. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (81 percent vs. 44 percent) to have had a drink of alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (47 percent vs. 4 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have driven a car after drinking alcohol in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are also more likely (49 percent vs. 16 percent) to have driven a car after drinking alcohol than students who do not use methamphetamines.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (75 percent vs. 10 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have been involved in binge drinking (five or more drinks of alcohol in a row) in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are about twice as likely (73 percent vs. 30 percent) to have been involved in binge drinking.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to have used tobacco products on one or more of the past 30 days than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (73 percent vs. 10 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (77 percent vs. 20 percent) to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (42 percent vs. 5 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (38 percent vs. 13 percent) to have used chewing tobacco or snuff on one or more of the 30 days prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to have used marijuana in the past 30 days than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are over ten times more likely (75 percent vs. 7 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have used marijuana in the 30 days prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are over four times as likely (73 percent vs. 15 percent) to have used marijuana in the 30 days prior to taking the survey than high school students who do not use methamphetamines.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to have sniffed glue or used inhalants during their life than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (75 percent vs. 13 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have had sniffed glue or used inhalants in their lifetime. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (55 percent vs. 12 percent) to have sniffed glue or used inhalants in their lifetime.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to be sexually active than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (64 percent vs. 6 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have had sexual intercourse during the three months prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (73 percent vs. 27 percent) to have had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to taking the survey than high school youth who do not use methamphetamines.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to have been in at least one fight during the past 12 months than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (87 percent vs. 39 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have been in at least one fight in the 12 months prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (69 percent vs. 27 percent) to have been in at least one fight in the 12 months prior to taking the survey than high school youth who do not use methamphetamines.

- **Montana youth who use methamphetamines are more likely to have attempted suicide than youth who do not use methamphetamines.**

Montana 7th and 8th graders who use methamphetamines are more likely (51 percent vs. 11 percent) than students who do not use methamphetamines to have attempted suicide during the 12 months prior to taking the survey. Similarly, Montana high school youth who use methamphetamines are more likely (34 percent vs. 11 percent) to have attempted suicide in the 12 months prior to taking the survey.

- **Montana youth who do not use methamphetamines are more likely to think of themselves as about the right weight than youth who use methamphetamines.**

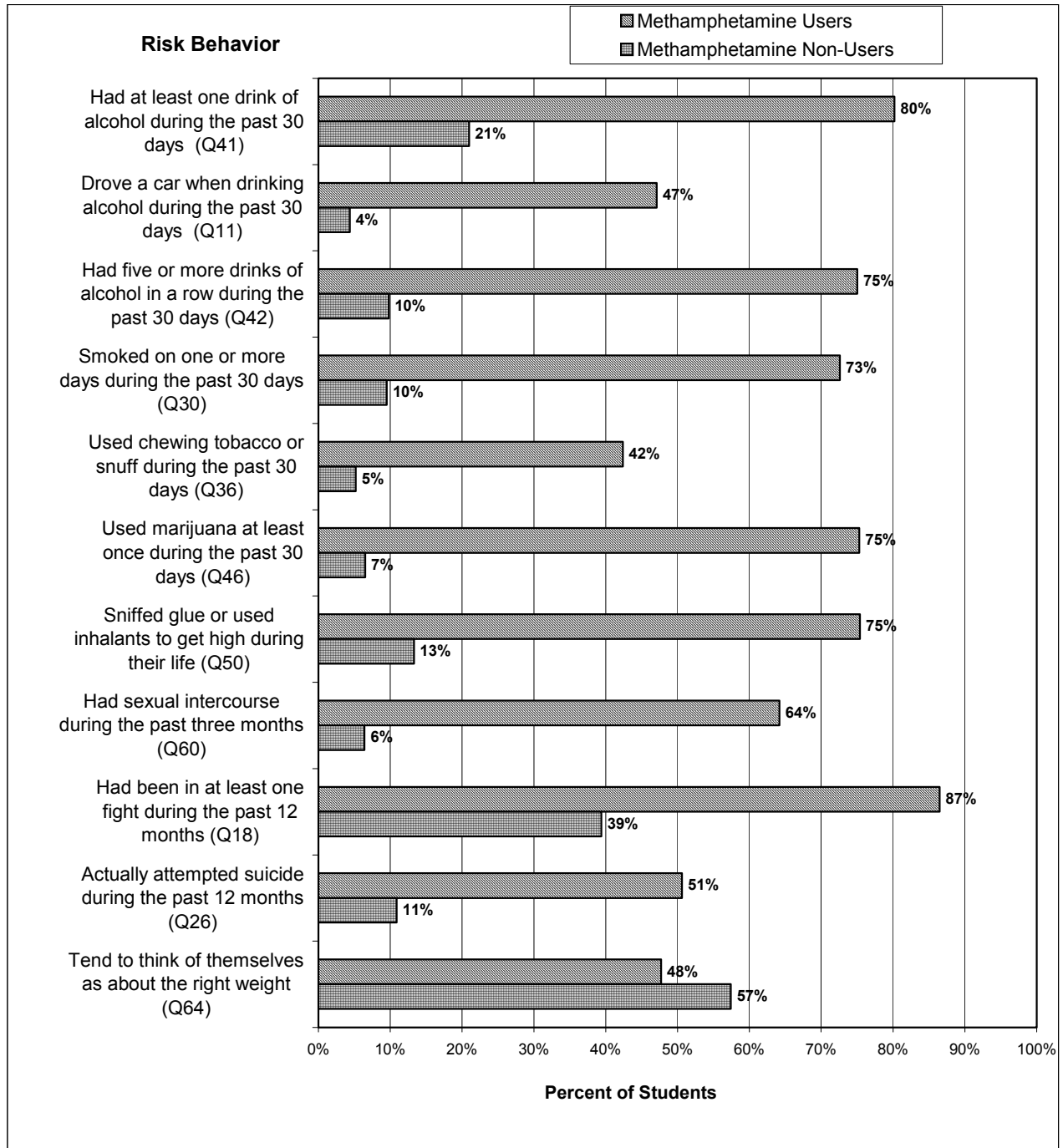
Montana 7th and 8th graders who do not use methamphetamines are more likely (57 percent vs. 48 percent) than students who use methamphetamines to think of themselves as about the right weight. Similarly, Montana high school youth who do not use methamphetamines are more likely (55 percent vs. 46 percent) to think of themselves as about the right weight.

Clearly, Montana youth who use methamphetamines also place themselves at higher risk for negative health consequences from other undesirable behaviors than youth who do not use methamphetamines. This association exists in every behavior risk category examined and is indicative of the unhealthy and eventually costly lifestyles of the methamphetamine users.

**Table 1**  
**2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users**  
**Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students**

<b>Health Risk Behavior</b>	<b>Methamphetamine Users</b>	<b>Methamphetamine Non-Users</b>
Had at least one drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (Q41)	80.2%	21.0%
Drove a car when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (Q11)	47.1%	4.4%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q42)	75.0%	9.8%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q30)	72.6%	9.5%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q36)	42.4%	5.2%
Used marijuana at least once during the past 30 days (Q46)	75.3%	6.5%
Sniffed glue or used inhalants to get high during their life (Q50)	75.4%	13.3%
Had sexual intercourse during the past three months (Q60)	64.2%	6.4%
Had been in at least one fight during the past 12 months (Q18)	86.5%	39.4%
Actually attempted suicide during the past 12 months (Q26)	50.6%	10.9%
Tend to think of themselves as about the right weight (Q64)	47.7%	57.4%

**Figure 1**  
**2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users**  
**Montana 7th and 8th Grade Students**



**Table 2**  
**2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users**  
**Montana High School Students**

<b>Health Risk Behavior</b>	<b>Methamphetamine Users</b>	<b>Methamphetamine Non-Users</b>
Had at least one drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (Q41)	80.9%	43.7%
Drove a car when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (Q11)	48.9%	15.9%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row during the past 30 days (Q42)	72.9%	29.8%
Smoked on one or more days during the past 30 days (Q30)	77.0%	20.4%
Used chewing tobacco or snuff during the past 30 days (Q36)	38.3%	13.2%
Used marijuana at least once during the past 30 days (Q46)	72.5%	15.3%
Sniffed glue or used inhalants to get high during their life (Q50)	54.6%	11.5%
Had sexual intercourse during the past three months (Q60)	72.9%	26.6%
Had been in at least one fight during the past 12 months (Q18)	68.7%	26.5%
Actually attempted suicide during the past 12 months (Q26)	34.0%	10.8%
Tend to think of themselves as about the right weight (Q64)	46.4%	55.0%



**Figure 2**  
**2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**  
**Risk Behaviors of Methamphetamine Users vs. Non-Users**  
**Montana High School Students**

